



**December 2011**



**Jodi Ross,**  
Town  
Manager

[jross@westfordma.gov](mailto:jross@westfordma.gov)  
[www.westfordma.gov/tm](http://www.westfordma.gov/tm)  
978-692-5500

**Subscribe to Town News**



**Receive Important Town  
Notices and Information  
See page 7.**

**Call for Photos  
See page 7.**

**Become Involved in  
Local Government:  
Join a Board or  
Committee  
See page 7.**

**Make-Up Flu Clinic  
January 4, 2012  
See page 8 for details.**

**Annual Town Meeting  
Warrant opened on  
December 15.**

**Deadline for petition arti-  
cles to be submitted to  
the Town Clerk is Tues-  
day, January 24 at 2 pm.**

**Watch Meetings Online**

**westford**  
*CAT*

[www.westfordcat.org](http://www.westfordcat.org)

**Dear Westford Residents,**

Random acts of kindness occur throughout the year, not just during the holiday season, and they are very common in our wonderfully generous town. Recently I learned about a few acts of kindness, helpfulness, and good will that have occurred in our cemeteries; specifically, a group of anonymous individuals from the Billerica area, placed wreaths on each of the 47 veterans' graves in Pine Grove cemetery, a gesture in memory of the late Sergeant William Woitowicz. Also, local resident Adam Jarnagin organized a group of 40 people from The Church of Latter-Day Saints to rake the grounds in our Fairview and Westlawn cemeteries. The group consisted of families from Westford, Chelmsford, Tyngsborough, and Lowell. This was an enormous help to the Cemetery Department in light of the significant cleanup required following the October Nor'easter. Thank you to all of those volunteers who participated in these events – your care, concern, and helpfulness are greatly appreciated.

The tragic loss of Worcester firefighter Jon D. Davies, while battling a fire in the line of duty, makes me realize again how fortunate we are, and how thankful we should be for our public safety officers. These employees put their lives on the line on a daily basis. During everyday occurrences, and events when the rest of us are hopefully safely inside our homes (during hurricanes, ice storms, and other weather emergencies) these employees are out in the elements, attending to the duties at hand, without regard for their own personal safety. Employees worked during the many recent storms in terribly unsafe conditions, with trees and live wires crashing down, sparks flying, and cars skidding. These public servants risk their lives to create a safer situation for the rest of us. My heart goes out to the family and friends of Firefighter Davies, and I feel compelled to thank our own public servants again for all they do.

In the aftermath of the October 29<sup>th</sup> snowstorm, our website survey generated 131 responses providing us with comments regarding our town's and National Grid's preparation for and response to the storm. We truly appreciate your time spent submitting your comments and suggestions, and we will be providing responses to the common-themed questions shortly. I will be attending a hearing held by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) which is investigating the efforts of National Grid to prepare for and restore power related to the storm. These comments along with town staff and official input will be summarized both verbally and in writing to the DPU for usage in their investigation.

**(Continued on next page)**



(Continued from page 1)

The Energy Committee has agreed to examine what measures may be taken to prevent future long-term power outages and also to explore the possibility of switching electricity providers. Their next meeting is scheduled for December 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Police Department training room. Please stay tuned for more information on our website.

Our town was awarded a \$5,000 grant from our worker's compensation insurance carrier (Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association), which enabled us to purchase a safety trailer with barricades and cones that was extremely helpful during our recent snowstorm. Many of you already are using the police department's [Facebook](#) page as a tool for up-to-date information during storms and power-outages, and we continue to explore new options to improve our methods of communication with all of you.

Recently our town support staff completed "Effective Team Dynamics" training, which focused on ensuring their actions and goals are properly aligned with the priorities of the town, along with developing effective skills in areas such as time management, prioritization, handling interruptions, problem-solving, and self-motivation.

Our highway, cemetery, park, school, and water department staffs recently completed an "OSHA-10" construction industry training program. This free 10-hour preventative training program was presented to enhance employees' skills and productivity, to ensure work-site safety, and to ultimately prevent work-related injuries.

I am pleased to announce that our town planner, Chris Kluchman, was awarded the American Planner's Association's Distinguished Service Award for 2011. Congratulations Chris on this honor, and especially for a job well done!

My best wishes to you, your family, friends, and loved ones for a very happy holiday season!

Sincerely,

Jodi Ross



## Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery News

### **Community Fields Project**

The synthetic turf field at Westford Academy, renamed the WA Trustees Field has been completed through private fundraising and donations. The next phase of the project has begun at Nutting Road. Contractor Green Acres began work on the two synthetic turf fields the end of November with anticipated completion date of April 2012. Parks and Recreation Commissioners note the timing of the bid resulted in favorable pricing for the project. The Westford Friends of Recreation – Community Fields Fundraising Committee continues additional fundraising to complete the parking lot and landscaping. For information on the project visit:

[www.westfordturf.com](http://www.westfordturf.com)



*Westford Academy Trustees Field*

### **Cemetery Fees Increase – Effective January 1, 2012**

The Cemetery Commission has approved an increase in the fee structure for cemetery-related charges. The last change in fees was in 2008. The Cemetery Commission annually reviews the cost of operating the town's six cemeteries and the fee structure is reviewed in relation to the cost. Additionally the Commission looks at what other cemeteries charge.

For a listing of the fees go to [www.westfordma.gov/cemetery](http://www.westfordma.gov/cemetery)

### **WPC Afterschool Enrichment Program**

The department's popular WPC (Westford Partnership for Children) afterschool enrichment program is at all six elementary schools. It has been a successful fall season and registration for session 3, January 3 – March 2, 2012 is available now. Activities vary each day and may include homework club, art, Tae Kwon Do, sports/games, math games, computer lab, board games, no bake cooking, and for winter "Snow Much Fun." New to the program is indoor tennis. Donna Holmes, Certified Tennis Professional will be teaching the USTA quick tennis program that enables participants to play in a short period of time. Registration forms are available at the school, department office, or online at:

[www.westfordrec.com](http://www.westfordrec.com)

### **The Middle School Rec Club**

Held at Stony Brook School for both Blanchard and Stony Brook students. Geared toward the middle schooler. Activities include homework club under the guidance of Mrs. Ewing and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Ms. Paroskie. Get help with homework, study skills etc., What's cooking, games galore, sports center, garage band, girls club, and the popular TGIF are a few of the choices offered. Registration for the winter session, January 3 - March 2, currently is taking place with forms available online at:

[www.westfordrec.com](http://www.westfordrec.com)

## J. V. Fletcher Library News

### A NEW YEAR AT THE FLETCHER LIBRARY

NEW collections and NEW services for our patrons. Starting in January, the Library will be subscribing to **One Click Digital**, a new E-Audiobook downloadable service from Recorded Books. **Here's what is exciting:** there are no waiting lists (all of the digital books in One Click Digital always are available for immediate download); patrons will have the exclusive rights to Recorded Book content, and all content is iPod compatible!

Another new database that is sure to garner a captive audience will be the **Value Line Investment Survey and Small and Mid Cap Edition Database**. Every week the Survey covers about 135 stocks in seven or eight industries.



Value Line®

*The Most Trusted Name in Investment Research®*

The Small and Mid-Cap Edition features consensus earnings estimates for many companies, a business description of each company, including recent corporate developments, and Value Line's Performance Ranks, designed to predict relative price performance over the next six to 12 months. In addition to our weekly print editions, Westford library card holders will have the option to read the full editions online from their homes, businesses, or even in the Library.

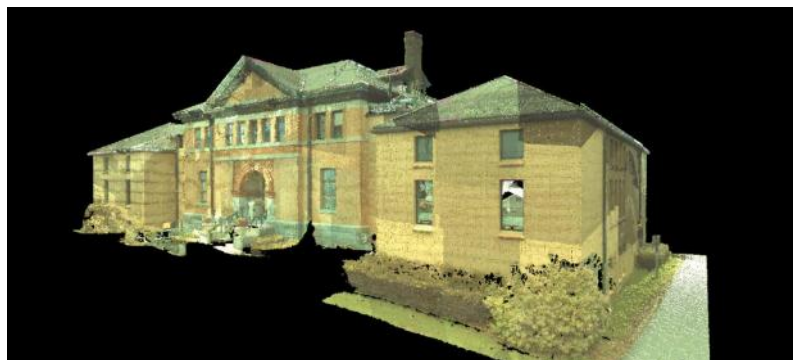
Not to be left in the dust, Youth Services will introduce **TUMBLEBOOKS**: "TumbleBooks are created by adding animation, sound, music, and narration to existing picture books in order to produce an electronic picture book, which you can read, or have read to you."

[www.TumbleBook Library Tour](http://www.TumbleBook Library Tour)



TumbleBook™  
**LIBRARY**

Happy Holidays!



3D Laser Scan by LandTech



## Cameron Senior Center News

Photos from the Holiday Luncheon held on December 6



Thank you to the Westford Honors Chorus for providing wonderful entertainment (not Pictured).



## January Events

**Genealogy Workshops** at the Cameron Senior Center starting on Tuesday, January 10, 2012, from 9 am - 12 Noon and continuing every week. If you would like more information, please call the Senior Center at 978-692-5523.

**Ladies Belly Dancing** at the Cameron Senior Center with Louise starting on Monday, January 23, 2012, at 10 AM. If you are interested please, call the Senior Center at 978-692-5523 for the cost and to sign up.

## Highway Department News

### Westford's Snow Removal Strategy

#### When the Snow Begins

When a snowstorm begins, the Department responds by treating all roads with deicing chemicals. Treating the road surfaces serves two purposes — preventing snow and ice from bonding to the surface and to keep traffic flowing. Treating the roads takes approximately 2 1/2 – 3 hours. Please remember that our crews must travel on snow covered, slippery untreated roads to get here at any hour of the day or night. Please be patient as the crews will be out as soon as possible to begin snow removal operations.



#### During the Storm

Plowing operations begin when there is an accumulation of **2 to 4 inches of snow** on road surfaces. Depending upon the severity of the storm, town forces are assisted by hired contractors to expedite the process of snow removal. Each vehicle is assigned to a predetermined route and will remain there until the storm subsides unless an emergency occurs that requires reassignment of equipment from one location to another. The main objective is to keep all roads passable during the storm. Unfortunately, it is not possible to keep the roads free of snow without filling in many driveways; therefore, when you clean the end of your driveway, deposit the excess snow to the downstream side of your driveway. This will minimize the redeposit of snow into the cleared opening when the plow makes its next pass.

#### Following the Storm

After plowing is completed, roads are given a final treatment of deicing chemical. In the days following a storm, scraping and treating of roads continues depending upon weather forecasts. If colder weather is forecasted streets must be scraped of snow and slush to prevent icing of the surface when the temperature drops and also to widen the road edge so that drainage structures are exposed if the temperatures rise and melting occurs. As time allows, snow is removed from intersections where sight distance is a concern.

#### Keeping the Town Right-of-Way Clear for Snow Removal

The town generally owns the land from the edge of roadway up to 15 feet back depending on the particular road. Snow is pushed back into this area after large snow fall events to make room for future snow fall. **Residents should move existing brush piles out of the right-of-way, and keep this area clear. Brush left next to the road covered in snow becomes a hazard to plow operators and property.**

For More Information: [www.westfordma.gov/highway](http://www.westfordma.gov/highway)



## Call For Photographs

Please submit your entries for the Town Manager's Call for Photos. Selected photos may be used on the town website and will be featured in the newsletter throughout the year. Photos should be of public spaces in Westford and should highlight the various changes that occur seasonally. Submit your photos digitally by emailing to [gis@westfordma.gov](mailto:gis@westfordma.gov) in a jpeg format, large enough to be viewed as a 4"x6" image. The images should not contain people.

Deadline for submission of photos is January 13th.

## Subscribe to Town Notices

The Town of Westford offers this service as a way of keeping residents informed of important notices. Whenever a new notice is posted to the website, you have an opportunity to receive a copy of that posting in your personal twitter account, email box, or RSS feed automatically. Please visit [www.westfordma.gov/subscriber](http://www.westfordma.gov/subscriber) to enroll.



## Become Involved in Local Government

### Boards and Committees

Westford residents are encouraged to voice their opinions, as well as becoming actively involved in town government. For a list of Board and Committee vacancies please visit: <https://data.westfordma.gov/bc/> or the Town Clerk's office.



## Health Department News

### Make-Up Flu Clinic Scheduled!

Due to this year's early winter storm, we are having one makeup clinic for Westford residents ages 3 yrs\* and older!

- Both nasal spray and injectable forms of the vaccine will be offered.
- Walk-in only, no appointments necessary.
- Children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent.
- Bring your insurance card, if you have one.\*\*

**Date:** Wednesday, January 4, 2012  
**Time:** 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Millennium School  
23 Depot Street (Behind the Abbot School)  
**Fee:** No charge, regardless of insurance coverage



\*Please note that because of limited pediatric vaccine, we request that those under the age of 36 months receive their vaccine from their MD, if possible.

\*\*Please bring insurance information as the town can seek reimbursement from insurance carriers.

### Used Syringes Disposal Reminder!

The Health Department collects used sharps (syringes and lancets) from **Westford residents only**. Collection sites are at the **Health Department located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Town Hall (8am-4pm)**, or at the **Kiosk located in the Police Department entry way**. All materials must be delivered in a sharps container and it is requested that containers are full before dropping them off. This will help avoid unnecessary costs pertaining to disposal of the materials. Ask for assistance or call 978 692-5509 if Kiosk is full. Not for commercial use.

Please follow these directions to ensure proper disposal :

- No Loose Needles, all sharps must be disposed of in a sharps container
- If you do not have a personal sharps container, you may use a puncture resistant container such as a one-gallon bleach/laundry bottle; a one pound sealed and taped coffee can or a 1.5 liter plastic soda bottle.
- No glass containers.
- No plastic or paper bags.
- Do not leave any items outside the kiosk or office.



(Health Department News continued on next page.)



## Health Department News (continued)

### Upper Merrimack Valley MRC Awarded National Recognition for Response

The 550 - member Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps, received a certificate of appreciation from the U.S. Public Health Service. Rear Admiral Michael R. Milner, from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, presented the unit award at a MRC conference held in Avon, CT in November. The MRC unit, based at the Westford Health Department, was recognized for 'Outstanding Volunteer Service' in recent events.

The UMV MRC has provided community service and disaster response throughout the region since 2004. They have been particularly active since June, when its members provided volunteer staffing for emergency shelters during the tornado deployment in Western MA. Fifty members were on standby for a possible call-out when Hurricane Irene ravaged the east coast. Ninety MRC volunteers support a dozen flu clinics across the region this fall.

Between flu clinics, MRC members also responded in droves to numerous requests for staffing warming stations and overnight shelters in those same communities. The October snow storm that knocked out power from thousands of local families caused UMV communities to make provisions that required staffing around the clock, to protect their residents. The elderly and medically fragile were the most vulnerable, which tapped the skills of medical members. However, the unit's non-medical volunteers were equally valued for their support of administrative and operational needs.

In addition to disaster response, members were on hand this season for a 'prescription drug take-back' event, and to raise awareness of the MRC at a pharmaceutical conference. Members were involved in numerous Preparedness Month activities during September: promoting the national 'Let's Move!' campaign to combat childhood obesity, and raising awareness of family preparedness and other public health initiatives.

The unit is one of over 970 MRCs with 203,000 volunteers across the nation. The national MRC program reports to the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General.



## Water Department News

The Westford Water Department formed over 100 years ago as the privately-founded Westford Water Company in order to address poor water quality and associated health issues. In 1955 the town voted to purchase the water company creating the present day Westford Water Department. In 1992 the town voted to establish a Water Enterprise Fund which allowed the Department to operate as a self-sufficient entity -- not reliant on tax revenue but solely on customer usage fees and charges.

A lot has changed since those bucolic days of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Westford has shed some of its rural character and become a bedroom community and magnet for commercial activity. This growth combined with the aging of water system infrastructure requires us to plan ahead for large-scale expansion and upgrade projects. These Capital Projects are crucial for us to continue providing high quality drinking water and fire protection services as our town grows.



*Original water pump at Forge Village Road*

### How do we plan for Capital Projects?

Our Water System Master Plan helps us to address the effects of both growth and aging. This plan forecasts future water use needs based on a growing population and business development. In addition, the Plan recommends and prioritizes future projects to address not only capacity growth but needed system improvements. Many of the projects involve replacement of old water mains. Remember, some of these mains are over 100 years old!

### How do we pay for these Capital Projects?

Westford Water Department customers provide the funding for Capital Projects. The costs for these projects are carefully calculated and projected in a financial model and compared with a conservative estimate of expected revenue. This forecasting has allowed the Water Department to determine that we can afford capital projects, while maintaining stable water rates for several years. We have explored additional funding options such as state grants and loans. Capital Projects are prioritized on a basis of impact on system improvement. For example, projects that affect a larger number of customers are typically assigned a higher priority. Below includes just a few of the future Water Department Capital Projects in the works:

- **Route 110 Water Main Replacement**
- **Prospect Hill Storage Tank Replacement**
- **Oak Hill Area Water Main Replacement in Nabnassett**
- **Graniteville Road Area Water Main Replacement**



*Prospect Hill Storage Tank*